

CLAIMS

1. A method of distributing information to users in a cellular telecommunications network comprising a plurality of base stations transceiving in a plurality of cells of said network, said method comprising:

providing a plurality of mobile stations, each of said mobile stations having an associated information access status;

broadcasting a signal on a common channel of at least one cell of said network, said signal containing a limited access message in encrypted form, for general reception in said at least one cell;

enabling first mobile stations having a first information access status to decrypt and present said message to a user in unencrypted form when being served by said cell; and

preventing second mobile stations having a second information access status from presenting said message in unencrypted form to a user when being served in said cell,

wherein said first mobile stations are provided with a removable module which may be used in association with any of a plurality of mobile stations, said removable module storing a decryption key for said message,

and wherein said message is decrypted, using said decryption key, in said removable module.

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2. A method according to claim 1, wherein said signal comprises a message identifier accompanying a message and said method comprises enabling both said first and second mobile stations to read said message identifier.

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3. A method according to claim 1 or 2, wherein said decryption key is stored in said removable module in encrypted form.

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4. A method according to claim 3, wherein said decryption key is decrypted by said first mobile station using a data string specific to said removable module.

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5. A method according to claim 4, wherein said data string is a subscriber identifier used in said cellular telecommunications network.

6. A method according to any preceding claim, further comprising transmitting said decryption key to said first mobile stations via a radio interface in said cellular telecommunications network.

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7. A method according to any preceding claim, wherein said removable module is a subscriber identity module.

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8. A method according to claim 7, wherein said message includes a transfer protocol identifier indicating that the message is of a type for data download to the subscriber identity module from the mobile station.

5 9. A method according to any preceding claim, wherein said removable module stores an application programme for performing the decryption and for controlling a display of said message on the mobile station.

10 10. A method according to any preceding claim, wherein said signal comprises a plurality of limited access messages each having a corresponding decryption key,

15 said method comprising providing said first mobile stations with said decryption keys, storing said decryption keys on removable modules of said first mobile stations, and enabling only ones of said first mobile stations having a decryption key corresponding to a limited access message to present said limited access message to a user in unencrypted form when being served in said cell.

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20 11. A method according to claim 10, comprising providing each of said first mobile stations with a selection of said subscription keys in accordance with a subscription held for each first mobile station respectively.

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12. A method according to any preceding claim, wherein alternative limited access messages are broadcast in cells located in different areas of said cellular telecommunications network.

5 13. A method according to any preceding, wherein said common channel is a cell broadcast channel of a GSM-type communications system.

10 14. A mobile station for receiving information in a cellular telecommunications system, said mobile station comprising:
means for receiving an encrypted message broadcast on a common channel of a cell of said cellular telecommunications system; and
means for displaying said message, when decrypted, to a user; and
a removable module comprising a memory for storing a decryption key, and means for decrypting said message using said stored decryption key.

15 15. A mobile station according to claim 14, wherein said removable module is a subscriber identity module.

20 16. A mobile station according to claim 14 or 15, wherein said removable module stores an application programme for performing the decryption and for controlling the display of said message on the mobile station.

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17. A GSM Phase 2+ mobile station according to any of claims 14 to 16.

5 18. A cellular mobile telephone according to any of claims 14 to 17.

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